

Message Text

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NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 ACDA-07
TRSE-00 OMB-01 DHA-02 IO-13 /082 W
-----140912Z 039542 /11

R 131551Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0486
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
USMISSION NATO
SECDEF WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
CINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENNA 0267

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, UR, AU
SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN MISSILES AND ARTICLE 13 OF STATE TREATY

REFS: (A) VIENNA 0078, (B) VIENNA 76 10447 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: LUETGENDORF'S JANUARY 4 "DIE WELT" INTERVIEW
ON "OBSCOLESCENCE" OF STATE TREATY ARTICLE 13 BAN ON MISSILES
HAS CAUSED HEAVY POLITICAL FALLOUT IN AUSTRIA. CHANCELLOR HAS
SEVERELY CHIDED DEFENSE MINISTER PUBLICLY FOR CALLING FOR
WHAT KREISKY FELT WAS REVISION OF ARTICLE 13. FOREIGN
MINISTER IN TURN QUESTIONED PROPERIETY AND WISDOM OF
LUETGENDORF IN RAISING ISSUE AND REAFFIRMED GOA POSITION
THAT AUSTRIA DOES NOT WISH REVISE OR REINTERPRET TREATY.
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LUETGENDORF, FOR HIS PART, HAS STUBBORNLY AND PUBLICLY
RECONFIRMED CORRECTNESS OF HIS VIEW THAT AUSTRIA NEEDS
MISSILES FOR VIABLE DEFENSE AND THAT HIS OBSERVATIONS
WERE STATEMENTS OF FACT, NOT POLITICAL JUDGEMENTS ON
WHAT TO DO WITH STATE TREATY. KREISKY'S LATEST
REJOINDER TO LUETGENDORF WAS THAT SOVIETS WILL NOT
BUDGE ON ISSUE AND THAT MATTER IS NOW CLOSED. CARIOUS

PERSONAL AND POLITICAL MOTIVES ARE BEHIND LUETGENDORF AND KREISKY PUBLIC STANCES. RECOMMENDED US POSITION IS AVOIDANCE OF ANY COMMENT ON REVISION OF STATE TREATY BUT RECOGNITION, IF ASKED, THAT AUSTRIAN FORCES, AS IS ALREADY CASE OF OTHER EUROPEAN NEUTRALS, SHOULD HAVE DEFENSIVE MISSILES. END SUMMARY.

2. KREISKY WAS QUOTED IN TELEPHONE INTERVIEW LAST WEEK AS EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER "OPEN CONFRONTATION WITH USSR" IF AUSTRIA WERE TO INSIST UPON NEW INTERPRETATION OR REPEAL OF MISSILE BAN AFTER SOVIETS HAVE REJECTED REPEATED AUSTRIAN INITIATIVES ON MATTER. KREISKY REPORTEDLY ALSO RULED OUT APPEAL TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL (ROUTE FINLAND FOLLOWED APPARENTLY IN HAVING SIMILAR RESTRICTION IN ITS PEACE TREATY LIFTED), POINTING TO DANGERS FOR AUSTRIA IF YUGOSLAVS WERE THUS ENCOURAGED TO INITIATE ACTION ON ARTICLE 7 OF STATE TREATY (CONTROVERSY OVER TREATMENT OF MINORITIES IN AUSTRIA).

3. ACCORDING TO AUSTRIAN PRESS OF JANUARY 8, YUGOSLAVS, THROUGH DOMESTIC PRESS, SEIZED OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE LUETGENDORF FOR RAISING ISSUE OF ARTICLE 13 BAN ON MISSILES. "POLITIKA" TERMED STATEMENT AN EROSION OF AUSTRIAN OBLIGATIONS AND SERIOUS PRECEDENT WHILE "BORBA" DENOUNCED WHAT IT CALLED AMBITIONS OF CERTAIN AUSTRIAN POLITICAL LEADERS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH NEUTRALITY OR POLICY OF PEACE. QUERIED ON FOREGOING, KREISKY REFUSED TO COMMENT ON YUGOSLAV PRESS CONFIDENTIAL

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ATTACKS, BUT REAFFIRMED ABSENCE OF ANY DESIRE BY AUSTRIA TO REVISE STATE TREATY. IN INTERVIEW SAME DAY, FOREIGN MINISTER PAHR TERMED YUGOSLAV PRESS STORIES "INCOMPREHENSIBLE" SINCE, AS HE PUT IT, AUSTRIA DEMANDS NEITHER REVISION NOR REINTERPRETATION OF STATE TREATY. NON-MARXIST OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE HALF-HEARTEDLY DEFENDED LUETGENDORF STANCE THAT ARTICLE 13 BAN IS OBSOLETE AND QUESTIONED GOA CONFUSION AND LACK OF COORDINATION IN PUBLIC POSITIONS TAKEN, WHILE COMMUNIST PRESS, CITING KREISKY OPPOSITION TO TAMPERING WITH ARTICLE 13, CALLED DISMISSAL OF LUETGENDORF NEXT LOGICAL GOA ACTION.

4. LUETGENDORF RETURNED TO FRAY WITH ANOTHER INTERVIEW (DIE PRESSE - JANUARY 9), INSISTING THAT INITIAL KREISKY-PAHR REACTIONS PROBABLY BASED ON NON-AVAILABILITY TO THEM OF FULL TEXT OF "DIE WELT" INTERVIEW (PROBABLY CORRECT) AND THAT AUSTRIA'S LACK OF ADEQUATE MEANS OF DEFENSE, INCLUDING ABSENCE OF MISSILES, WAS

STATEMENT OF FACT, NOT DEMAND FOR REVISION OF STATE TREATY.

5. FOLLOWING CABINET MEETING JANUARY 11, KREISKY, AGAIN QUESTIONED BY PRESS, EXPRESSED CONTINUED OPPOSITION TO ANY "TINKERING" WITH TEXT OF STATE TREATY AND INDICATED HE CONSIDERED MATTER CLOSED. HE ADDED HE UNDERSTOOD DEFENSE MINISTER'S DESIRE FOR MODERN WEAPONRY BUT RECALLED AGAIN UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO DATE WITH SOVIET UNION TO HAVE BAN ON MISSILES MODIFIED. LUETGENDORF, IN RESPONSE TO SUBSEQUENT PRESS QUERY, REAFFIRMED HIS ACCEPTANCE OF STATE TREATY BUT ALSO HIS RIGHT TO EXPRESS HIS OPINION ON DEFENSE MATTERS.

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6. COMMENT: SENIOR MFA OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY REGISTERED TO US THEIR DISMAY OVER GOA INTERNAL HANDLING OF ISSUE. THEIR PREFERENCE IS TO OVERCOME CURRENT IMPASSE ON MISSILES WITHOUT REFERENCE TO STATE TREATY. SUCH APPROACH FORESEES OBTAINING BAZOOKAS AND ROCKET BATTERIES (ALREADY DONE) AND MOVING BY STAGES INTO ACQUISITION OF LARGER SHORT-RANGE DEFENSE MISSILES.

IF PROCEDURE BECOMES SUBJECT OF PUBLIC COMMENT, GOA SHOULD CITE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AS NEUTRAL FOR ITS OWN EFFECTIVE DEFENSE -- AS IS CASE FOR SWITZERLAND, SWEDEN, AND FINLAND -- AS BASIC REASON FOR ACQUISITION OF MISSILES. IMPORTANT POINT IS TO AVOID PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF ARTICLE 13 WHICH GIVES RISE TO AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT LEADERS ARTICULATING IN EFFECT SOVIET INTERPRETATION
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THAT ARTICLE 13 BANS PURCHASE OR USE OF ANY AND ALL MISSILES IN SPITE OF REBUS SIC STANTIBUS CONSIDERATION (WORDING OF ARTICLE 13 WAS INITIALLY DRAFTED IN 1947).

7. MOTIVATION FOR LUETGENDORF'S REPEATED STRONG PUBLIC REAFFIRMATION OF CORRECTNESS OF HIS VIEWS, WHICH HAVE KEPT CONTROVERSY GOING SOMEWHAT TO EMBARRASSMENT OF CHANCELLOR, IS SUBJECT OF SPECULATION. MOST FEASIBLE EXPLANATION WE HAVE HEARD IS THAT LUETGENDORF IS IMPLICATED IN CURRENT DEFENSE MINISTRY SCANDAL INVOLVING GENERAL TOMSCHITZ AND IRREGULARITIES IN PROCUREMENT (REFTEL B) AND THAT HE WOULD RATHER BE DISMISSED FOR ROLE IN JUST NATIONAL CAUSE (MISSILE ACQUISITION) THAN AS SUBJECT OF MALFEASANCE-IN-OFFICE CASE. PUBLIC ATTACKS ON LUETGENDORF FROM VARIOUS QUARTERS ON MISSILES ISSUE TEND TO MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT TO DISMISS HIM.

8. CHANCELLOR'S HANDLING OF ISSUE SUGGESTS THAT HE IS EXPLOITING CONTROVERSY FOR HIS OWN POLITICAL AND PERSONAL REASONS. KREISKY STILL BEARS CHARACTER IMPRINT FROM 1930'S OF DISTASTE FOR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS. HE FEELS, IN CASE OF AUSTRIA, THAT VIABLE DEFENSE IS ILLUSORY AND THEREFORE WASTE OF TAX FUNDS. COROLLARY THERETO, ACCORDING TO KREISKY, IS THAT AUSTRIA'S SECURITY STANCE IS IMPROVED, NOT BY ARMS, BUT BY POLICY OF ACTIVE NEUTRALITY, PROMOTION OF EAST-WEST DETENTE AND HAVING VIENNA BECOME THIRD UN CITY. CONSTANT CITATIONS BY KREISKY OF ARTICLE 13 BAN ON MISSILES, AS INTERPRETED BY USSR, AND OF PREVIOUS REFUSALS OF USSR TO MODIFY ITS STANCE ON ISSUE, SERVE AS VIABLE EXPLANATION TO PUBLIC WHY AUSTRIA UNABLE TO OBTAIN MISSILES. LOGICAL EXTENSION OF THIS LINE OF ARGUMENTATION IS THAT BAN ON MISSILES ALSO MAKES SUPERFLUOUS PURCHASE OF MODERN INTERCEPTOR AIRCRAFT SINCE SUCH AIRCRAFT USELESS UNLESS EQUIPPED WITH MISSILES.
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KREISKY HAS BEEN UNABLE UNTIL NOW TO STALL AND POSTPONE ANY DEFINITIVE ACTION TO BUY INTERCEPTORS OR INCREASE DEFENSE OUTLAYS BECAUSE OF MISSILE PROBLEM. THIS APPROACH IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT FOR NON-MARXIST OPPOSITION PARTIES TO COUNTER DOMESTICALLY AT TIME WHEN GOA BUDGET DEFICITS CONTINUE TO INCREASE AND PUBLIC IS TESTY ABOUT INCREASES IN TAXES AND GENERAL COST OF LIVING. END COMMENT.

9. RECOMMENDATION: NATURE OF CURRENT CONTROVERSY, WHICH IS SO FAR LARGELY INTERNAL GOA CONFRONTATION, SUGGESTS THAT WE SHOULD AVOID ANY PUBLIC COMMENT ON REVISION OR REINTERPRETATION OF STATE TREATY, SHOULD QUESTION ARISE. OUR POSITION AT THIS JUNCTURE SHOULD BE THAT WE FEEL THAT NEUTRALS SUCH AS AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND, SWEDEN AND FINLAND, WHO DO NOT BELONG TO MILITARY ALLIANCES, AND WHO ARE THEREFORE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN DEFENSE, SHOULD HAVE SHORT-RANGE DEFENSIVE MISSILES, WHICH ARE PART OF ANY VIABLE MILITARY DEFENSE STRATEGY.BUCHANAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, AGREEMENTS, POLICIES, PRESS CONFERENCES, MISSILES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977VIENNA00267
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770014-0585
Format: TEL
From: VIENNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770153/aaaabulx.tel
Line Count: 245
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b4ff04da-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 VIENNA 78, 77 VIENNA 76
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3602045
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUSTRIAN MISSILES AND ARTICLE 13 OF STATE TREATY
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, UR, AU, (LUETGENDORF, KARL FERDINAND)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b4ff04da-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009